SPECIAL FEATURE NO. 3-1743 JUNE 5, 1978
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THE 1978 TONY AWARDS
(INSERTS IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR:

THE 1978 TONY AWARDS CEREMONY WAS NATIONALLY TELEVISED SUNDAY NIGHT FROM THE SCHUBERT THEATRE IN NEW YORK CITY. THIS BEAUTIFULLY PRODUCED EXTRAVAGANZA GAVE THE REST OF AMERICA A GLIMPSE OF THE GLAMOR THAT IS BROADWAY AND THE MAGIC OF LIVE THEATRE. ----------REPORTS.

VOICE:

THE ANTOINETTE PERRY AWARDS, "TONYS" FOR SHORT, WERE ESTABLISHED IN 1947 IN MEMORY OF AN ENERGETIC WOMAN, ACTIVE IN THE AMERICAN THEATRE DURING WORLD WAR II, TO HONOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN THE BROADWAY THEATRE. AND, STILL TODAY, ONLY SHOWS PRODUCED ON BROADWAY ARE ELIGIBLE. THE TONY AWARDS CEREMONY WAS FIRST PRODUCED AS A TELEVISION SPECIAL IN 1967. THE IMPACT OF PRIME-TIME TELEVISION EXPOSURE WAS IMMEDIATELY FELT. TODAY, THE TONY WINNERS ARE NATIONAL "NEWS", AND FOR THE TONY-WINNING SHOWS THERE ARE BIGGER BOX-OFFICE GROSSES AND LONGER RUNS. THE TONY AWARDS PRESENTATION IS A BIG TELEVISION EVENT. SO, THIS YEAR, AS IN THE PAST DECADE, MILLIONS OF AMERICANS SHARED IN THE EXCITEMENT AND ANTICIPATION, AS THE CURTAIN ROSE ON THE 1978 TONY AWARDS.

THE SILVER MEDALLION EMBOSSED WITH MASKS OF COMEDY AND TRAGEDY ARE AWARDED ANNUALLY FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN 19 CREATIVE CATEGORIES, BUT SINCE THIS YEAR, LIKE LAST YEAR, WAS ONE OF NEW YORK'S BUSIEST THEATRE SEASONS, THERE WERE ONLY FOUR (INSTEAD OF FIVE) NOMINEES IN EACH AWARD CATEGORY.

"AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'", A SALUTE TO BLACK JAZZ PIANO PLAYER, SINGER AND COMPOSER, OF THE 1930S, FATS WALLER, WAS NAMED BEST

MUSICAL OF 1978. IT ALSO WON THE AWARD FOR RICHARD MALTBY JR. AS BEST DIRECTOR OF A MUSICAL AND FOR NELL CARTER AS BEST FEATURED ACTRESS IN A MUSICAL. AND HERE IS MISS CARTER IN HER SHOWSTOPPING TUNE ENTITLED "MEAN TO ME":

TAPE: CUT ONE MUSIC (MEAN TO ME) 2:45

VOICE:

ANOTHER MUSICAL, "ON THE 20TH CENTURY" PICKED UP TONY AWARDS FOR THE BEST SCENIC DESIGN, THE BEST BOOK AND THE BEST ACTOR IN A MUSICAL. THIS LAST AWARD WAS WON BY THE ACTOR-SINGER JOHN CULLUM. LIZA MINNELLI WAS NAMED BEST ACTRESS IN A MUSICAL FOR HER PERFORMANCE IN "THE ACT", AN EXTREMELY DEMANDING SONG-AND-DANCE SHOW WITH A CABARET BACKGROUND. AS SHE ACCEPTED THE THIRD TONY AWARD OF HER CAREER, THE 31 YEAR OLD ACTRESS SAID:

TAPE: CUT TWO -- MINNELLI

"THANK YOU...OH MY NERVES...THANK YOU SO MUCH. I THINK THE THING THAT I LIKE TO DO MOST IN MY LIFE IS TO WORK HARD. AND I THINK, THE THING THAT I LIKE SECOND BEST IS WHEN SOMEBODY SAYS: YOU DID A GOOD JOB. SO THANK YOU. I'D LIKE TO THANK EVERYBODY CONNECTED WITH OUR SHOW, THEY KNOW WHO THEY ARE." (APPLAUSE)

VOICE:

THE CHOREOGRAPHY AWARD WENT TO BOB FOSSE, FOR HIS DANCE CREATIONS IN A MUSICAL CALLED, -- SIMPLY -- "DANCING" WHICH CELEBRATES THE MUSICAL COMEDY DANCE ROUTINES FOR WHICH BROADWAY IS JUSTLY FAMOUS.

THE DISTINGUISHED ACTRESS, JESSICA TANDY, WON, AFTER A THIRTY YEAR INTERVAL, HER SECOND TONY, FOR BEST ACTRESS, IN A PLAY, FOR HER PORTRAYAL OF AN OLD WOMAN IN "THE GIN GAME" -- BY D.L. COBURN. BARNARD HUGHES WAS NAMED BEST ACTOR IN A PLAY, FOR HIS STARRING ROLE IN "DA". WRITTEN BY IRISH PLAYWRIGHT, HUGH LEONARD, "DA" WAS NAMED THE BEST BROADWAY PLAY OF THE YEAR. ACCEPTING THE AWARD, DIRECTOR MELVIN BERNHARD, WHO ALSO WON A

TONY FOR HIS WORK ON "DA", HAD THIS TO SAY:

TAPE: CUT THREE -- BERNHARD

"I'D LIKE TO SAY THANK YOU TO THE TONY VOTERS, YOU PEOPLE, FOR CHOSING 'DA' AS THE BEST PLAY OF '78, BECAUSE, THERE'S ALWAYS A THRILL TO WIN A TONY, BUT TO WIN IT THIS YEAR IS THREE TIMES AS BIG A THRILL, BECAUSE THE COMPETITION WAS SO GOOD. WE HAD THREE WONDERFUL PLAYS: NEIL SIMON'S "CHAPTER TWO", WE HAD "DEATH TRAP" AND WE HAD "THE GIN GAME". SO WE ARE HAPPY THREE TIMES OVER. THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH."

VOICE:

AMONG THE SPECIAL AWARDS, ONE WAS PRESENTED BY COMEDIAN, BOB HOPE, TO THE 90-YEAR OLD AMERICAN COMPOSER, IRVING BERLIN, FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN THE THEATRE.

THE SELECTIONS FOR THE TONY AWARDS ARE MADE BY A COMMITTEE OF FIVE THEATRE JOURNALISTS AND PROFESSIONALS. THEY ARE VOTED ON BY SOME 430 THEATRE PEOPLE BY SECRET MAIL BALLOT. BUT THE SIGNIFICANCE AND THE MEANING OF IT ALL WAS BEST SUMMED UP BY ACTRESS LAUREN BACALL, AS THE 32ND ANNUAL TONY AWARDS CEREMONY CAME TO AND END:

TAPE: CUT FOUR -- BACALL

"(APPLAUSE) THANK YOU... IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED THAT GIVING PRIZES AND FORCING CREATIVE ARTISTS TO COMPETE WITH EACH OTHER IS OPPOSED TO THE BASIC IDEA OF ART....WELL..THAT'S NOT REALLY WHAT TONIGHT MEANS TO US. FIRST OF ALL, THIS IS OUR COMPANY PICNIC. THE ONE TIME, EACH YEAR, THAT WE ALL GET TOGETHER SOCIALLY. SECOND, WE HOPE THAT, THIS EVENING, WE HAVE REAFFIRMED OUR AWARENESS OF THE ENORMOUS CONTRIBUTION TO OUR NATIONAL LIFE WHICH IS MADE BY THE ARTS. WE APPLAUD THE MUSICIANS, PERFORMERS, COMPOSERS, WRITERS, ARTISTS, THE CREATIVE ENERGIES THAT COMBINE TO GIVE US THE SONGS WE SING, THE WORDS TO MAKE US LAUGH AND CRY. AND THE ARTISTS' VISIONS THAT DELIGHT OUR EYE. WHENEVER THESE ENERGIES CONVERGE IN FILMS, IN MUSIC, IN TELEVISION OR LIVE ON STAGE, AS WE HAVE CELEBRATED TONIGHT, THEY MAKE OUR LIVES RICHER."

VOICE:

LAUREN BACALL, AT THE 32ND ANNUAL TONY AWARDS CEREMONY, SEEN ON NATIONAL TELEVISION, SUNDAY, JUNE 4.

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